



## MDA News Digest April 2015



### A Message from Secretary Joe Bartenfelder

It has been a busy three months since I joined the Maryland Department of Agriculture to serve our agricultural community. I have kept my nose to the grindstone, and we have all been working hard.

In **this month's blog post**, I have provided an update on some of the latest activities of the department. For instance:

- During the 2015 General Assembly Session, we spent a lot of time working to defeat several anti-agriculture bills.
- Our proposed Phosphorus Management Tool regulations were published in the *Maryland Register* and are open for public comment until May 4.
- A new, deadly strain of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) was detected in the United States in December 2014. We are doing all we can to prepare in the event it comes to Maryland.



Secretary Joe Bartenfelder

We are working on many more issues. **[Read the complete blog post here.](#)**

Next month I plan to update you on an exciting branding campaign we are working on to help consumers identify Maryland products in the marketplace. Until then, I hope you have a productive and bountiful planting season.

### Upcoming Events, Training Sessions & Workshops

- **[Phosphorus Management Tool Regulations Published in the Maryland Register:](#)**

### 30-day Public Comment Period Ends May 4

- MDA Announces New Specialty Crop Grant Program; Application Deadline is May 8
- Governor Hogan Invites Chefs to Submit Recipes for Buy Local Cookout by May 8.
- Grant Applications for Spay & Neuter Projects Now Being Accepted through May 29
- Training Dates for 2015 Maryland Farmers Market Nutrition Programs Announced



## Headlines from MDA - General News Wrap Up

*Below are some of MDA's most recent news releases.*

- Michael Radebaugh Appointed as State Veterinarian
- MDA Encourages Participation in Pesticide Use Survey
- MDA Encourages Communication between Herbicide Applicators, Specialty Crop Producers
- New Farmers Market Finder - A Mobile Site for FMNP Participants
- Maryland Horse Industry Board hosted the Maryland Horse Chase, a two-week, statewide scavenger hunt. (Read more [here.](#))
- Mid-Atlantic State Ag Secretaries and Commissioners Meeting in Annapolis
- Agriculture Secretary Reads to Fullerton Elementary School Students
- Protect Local Waterways and the Chesapeake Bay by Following the Lawn Fertilizer Law
- MDA Launched 2015 Manure Happens Campaign
- Consensus Reached on PMT Regulations
- USDA provides nearly \$100,000 for Maryland surveys that protect agriculture, plants from pests, diseases
- Maryland Horse Industry Board Launches Statewide Network of Horse Discovery
- Westminster Livestock Auction now Official Tagging Facility
- Secretary of Agriculture Warns of Poisons in the Home; Tips to Protect Children and Pets from Accidental Exposure or Poisoning
- Maryland National Steeplechase Leaders Received March Touch of Class Award while Hall of Famer Buddy Wooters & three others receive it for April.
- Maryland Teens Get Back to Nature to Prepare for First Round of Environmental Education Competitions



Dr. Radebaugh



## Read all press releases

New on the Web - [www.mda.maryland.gov](http://www.mda.maryland.gov)

### New Webpage Highlights Bird Flu

#### [www.mda.maryland.gov/avianflu](http://www.mda.maryland.gov/avianflu)

This past month, we added a new page on our website dedicated to avian influenza, which is more commonly called, "bird flu." A highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) strain entered the U.S. in the Pacific Northwest in December 2014 and has been heading east. HPAI is characterized by high, fast moving fatality rates (more than 75%) within infected flocks. There are currently no known cases in Maryland but we are preparing for it just in case. Get the facts now.

We urge all commercial and backyard flock owners to take biosecurity seriously. [See a brochure about biosecurity measures you can take here.](#)



## MDA in Pictures & Video

We post photos to [Flickr](#) after an event. These photos are free for anyone (including media) to download & use. We just ask that you credit MDA (or the photographer noted) if you use them.

### Photos:

- Agriculture Secretary Joe Bartenfelder read to students at Fullerton Elementary School in Baltimore County for National Agriculture Day. [See photos here.](#)
- The Maryland Horse Chase, a two week, statewide scavenger hunt, kicked off festivities at Full Moon Farms. All photos by Jerry Dzierwinski. [See photos here.](#)
- Maryland Agricultural Commissioners toured agricultural facilities on the lower shore in April ([see photos here](#)) and they toured the MDA laboratories after their March meeting. [See photos here.](#)
- Secretary Bartenfelder met with students at Samuel Ogle Middle School in Prince George's County to learn more about their "Green Team" school. [See photos here.](#)
- Elsie & Elmer, the cows of MDA, are always a big hit when they're dressed up. See some of their latest in bovine fashions [here](#).



**Secretary Bartenfelder reads to students on National Agriculture Day**

See all [MDA Flickr albums](#).

See [MDA's Instagram](#) photos (best viewed on a mobile device)

#### Videos:

- [The Maryland's Best YouTube channel](#) has lots of short farmer profiles you can watch anywhere. Visit a farm without leaving home!

### Facebook: You're Invited to Like Us!

We update our [Facebook](#) page several times a week.

#### We like you! Come like us!

Come join us on Facebook! You'll see both fun and serious posts. You do not need a Facebook account to view our pages, but if you have an account, you can post comments and tell us what's on your mind.

- [MDA's Official Facebook page](#)
- [Maryland's Best Facebook page](#)
- [Maryland Horse Industry Board Facebook Page](#)
- [Maryland Farm to School Facebook page](#)



### Follow Us on Twitter



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[@MdsBest](#) - the Twitter feed for MDA's Marketing Office and the Maryland's Best Program

[@MdEquines](#) - the Twitter feed for MDA's Maryland Horse Industry Board

[@MdFarm2School](#) - the Twitter for MDA's Farm to School Program

### We invite your feedback

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We are always looking for ways to improve how we serve our constituents. Please send your comments, suggestions and ideas to [mda.news@maryland.gov](mailto:mda.news@maryland.gov) or call 410-841-5881. Or contact:

- Julie Oberg, Communications Director, 410-841-5888, [julie.oberg@maryland.gov](mailto:julie.oberg@maryland.gov)
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